

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00

INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07 TRSE-00 FRB-01

OMB-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 /048 W

-----072796 101850Z /64

O 101839Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9425

INFO ALL USCONS MEXICO

UNCLAS MEXICO 05820

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, MX

SUBJECT: DATA ON TSUSA 807 APPAREL (MAQUILADORAS); TEXTILES

REF: STATE 36498

1. FOLLOWING ARE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS CONCERNING MEXICAN MAQUILADORA (IN-BOND ASSEMBLY) PLANTS:

2. IN MID-1976 MEXICAN MAQUILADORAS OF ALL KINDS EMPLOYED AN ESTIMATED 75,000 WORKERS. TOGETHER WITH OTHER INDUSTRIAL GROUPS UNDER OVERALL RUBRIC OF "ALLIANCE FOR PRODUCTION", FOLLOWING DECEMBER 1976 INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT JOSE LOPEZ PORTILLO MAQUILADORA INDUSTRY UNDERTOOK TO CREATE SUBSTANTIAL NEW EMPLOYMENT DURING CURRENT SEXENIO (WHICH ENDS DECEMBER 1982). FOR ITS PART, MAQUILADORA INDUSTRY PLEDGED TO CREATE 175,000 NEW JOBS, 66,000 IN BORDER REGION AND REMAINDER IN INTERIOR, THUS BRINGING TOTAL MAQUILADORA EMPLOYMENT TO 250,000. HOWEVER, DURING OCTOBER 1977 CONVENTION OF CANACINTRA'S (NATIONAL CHAMBER OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES) MAQUILADORA INDUSTRY COUNCIL, COUNCIL LEADERS ADMITTED INDUSTRY HAD THUS FAR FALLEN FAR SHORT OF IT'S EMPLOYMENT CREATING GOAL. WHILE CONTINUED MODEST GROWTH IS LIKELY, IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY

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DRAMATIC NEW FACTORS IT IS UNLIKELY MAQUILADORA INDUSTRY WILL BE ANYWHERE NEAR ITS GOAL OF 250,000 JOBS BY DECEMBER 1982.

3. THERE IS NO DOUBT MEXICAN MAQUILADORA INDUSTRY IS SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE FACTOR IN THE ECONOMIES OF MEXICO'S MAJOR NORTHERN BORDER CITIES, AS WELL AS TO THE

ECONOMIES OF ADJOINING US CITIES, SINCE IT IS ESTIMATED THAT MEXICAN WORKERS EMPLOYED IN MAQUILADORAS SPEND A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THEIR INCOMES IN US OR FOR US GOODS AND SERVICES. HOWEVER, INFLUENCE OF GROWTH OF MAQUILADORA INDUSTRY IN REDUCING ILLEGAL MEXICAN MIGRATION TO US APPEARS QUESTIONABLE, SINCE WELL OVER TWO-THIRDS OF MAQUILADORA WORKFORCE IS FEMALE, AND OVERWHELMING BULK OF ILLEGAL MIGRANTS ARE MALE. ALSO, IT MIGHT BE ARGUED THAT LOCATION OF MAJORITY OF MAQUILADORAS, WITH GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS BY MEXICAN STANDARDS, ALONG NORTHERN BORDER ATTRACTS MORE POTENTIAL WORKERS THAN CAN BE EMPLOYED FROM OTHER PARTS OF MEXICO, THEREBY INCREASING PRESSURES FOR ILLEGAL MIGRATION. IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT 109,000 OF THE GOAL OF 175,000 NEW MAQUILADORA JOBS BY THE END OF 1982 ARE TARGETTED FOR THE INTERIOR OF MEXICO, WHERE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE SORELY NEEDED. HOWEVER, WHILE AS NOTED ABOVE THE CHANCES OF REACHING THIS OVERALL GOAL ARE SLIGHT, THE CHANCES OF REACHING THE GOAL OF NEW MAQUILADORA JOBS IN THE INTERIOR ARE PROBABLY EVEN DIMMER.

LUCEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DATA, TEXTILE INDUSTRY, EMPLOYMENT DATA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MEXICO05820
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780154-0269
Format: TEL
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780475/aaaacllc.tel
Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ab90aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 36498
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3021885
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DATA ON TSUSA 807 APPAREL (MAQUILADORAS); TEXTILES
TAGS: ETRD, ELAB, MX
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ab90aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014